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CHINESE BOAT-TRACKERS REFRESHING.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE CHINESE.

No. VI.

CHINESE BOAT-TRACKERS.

THE vast empire of China is intersected in every direction by rivers and canals, which form a more extensive system of water-communication than exists in any other country. From Canton in the south to Peking in the north,—a distance of nearly seventeen degrees of latitude,—the navigation is only once interrupted, and then only for a space of four-and-twenty miles. It is not our intention now to enter into the details of this system, or to describe the vessels which are employed on these lines of communication; we purpose only to relate a few particulars concerning this mode of navigation, and the class of persons by whom it is performed.

The use of sails is general; but when circumstances render them of no avail, the vessels are impelled by means of oars, or dragged along with ropes from the bank of the river or canal. The oars are used in a peculiar manner; there are two of them, turning upon pivots which are placed in narrow projecting pieces of wood near the bow of the vessel, and not the stern, as is the practice of most other nations. They are of a large size, from six to ten men being required to work each of them; and instead of being taken out of the water, as in the act of rowing, they are moved backwards and forwards beneath the surface, "in a similar manner to what in England is understood by sculling." This mode of using the oars is much better adapted to the crowded streams of China, than that of working them at the sides as in rowing. To lighten their labour, and assist them in keeping time with the strokes, the boatmen often have recourse to a rude air which is generally sung by the master, the whole of the crew joining in chorus. Mr. Barrow, who accompanied Lord Macartney's Embassy in 1793, has given a copy of the air, which he frequently heard.

On many a calm still evening, (he says,) when a dead silence reigned upon the water, have we listened with pleasure to this artless and unpolished air, which was sung, with little alteration, through the whole fleet. Extraordinary exertions of bodily strength, depending in a certain degree on the willingness of the mind, are frequently accompanied with exhilarating exclamations among the most savage people; but the Chinese song could not be considered in this point of view; like the exclamations of our seamen in hauling the ropes, or the oar-song of the Hebrideans, which, as Dr. Johnson has observed, resembles the proleusmatic verse by which the rowers of Grecian galleys were animated, the chief object of the Chinese chorus seemed to be that of combining cheerfulness with regularity.

Verses sweetens toil, however rude the sound.

When the wind or the tide is unfavourable, or when the vessels have to ascend a stream which has a rapid current, the system of tracking is adopted. This is similar to the system of towing practised on the rivers and canals of our own country; but while we employ horses for the task, the Chinese employ men. The number of "trackers" to a boat varies with its size, and with the strength of the opposing wind or current; Lord Amherst's embassy was provided with three hundred trackers, the number of boats being twenty. Mr. Ellis, the historian of that embassy, states the number as being for the larger boats from twenty to twenty-five, for those of the second class twelve, and for the smaller seven.

The track-ropes are commonly made of narrow strips of the strong siliceous substance which forms the outer covering of the bamboo, thus combining the greatest lightness with strength. These ropes are accurately described by that faithful old traveller,

Marco Polo, who visited China in the latter part of the thirteenth century. He tells us that the Chinese did not employ hempen cordage in their vessels, excepting for the masts and sails (the standing and running rigging); "they have canes," he says, "of the length of fifteen paces, which they split in their whole length into very thin pieces, and these, by twisting them together, they form into ropes three hundred paces long: so skilfully are they manufactured, that they are equal in strength to cordage made of hemp." His able commentator, Mr. Marsden, remarks, that persons who have seen the cables belonging to the *prongs* of the Eastern Islands might suppose that this account of twisting the bamboo into cordage was a mistake for the manufacture of cables by twisting the *rattan*, so commonly applied to that purpose; "but our author's correctness as to the material is fully proved by the testimony of modern travellers." Van Braam, who was one of the Dutch ambassadors to the Emperor of China in 1794, says, "Their ropes of rattan, or, to speak more exactly, bamboo, are of great advantage, because they unite lightness with strength."

Marco Polo adds, that "with these ropes vessels are tracked along the rivers, by means of ten or twelve horses to each, as well upwards against the current as in the opposite direction." Upon this sentence a curious remark may be made. Horses are not now used to track Chinese vessels; and from the general immutability of Chinese customs, this discrepancy between the practice of the present day and the statement of Marco Polo, might have been urged, to impugn his fidelity, if the labours of modern travellers had not firmly established his reputation. Yet it is remarkable, as Mr. Davis observes, that from this very instance of disagreement we derive an additional confirmation of his general correctness; for that the labour of tracking was once performed by horses, we have a singular proof in the language of the warrants or commissions issued by the emperor to his officers. The system is clearly explained by the Jesuit Duhalde, in his great work on China; after mentioning that the men to whom the task is now assigned are furnished by the mandarins of each city, he adds:—

The number of these men is determined according to the number of the horses marked on the *Cang-ho*, or Patent of the Emperor, that is to say, at the rate of three men for each horse; so that if eight horses are marked for an envoy, he will be furnished with twenty-four men.

The trackers do not form a particular class in China: they are taken indiscriminately from among the lower orders of the people. Their labour is extremely severe; we read of their toiling for sixteen hours consecutively, against a stream whose swiftness precluded the slightest intermission of their exertions. They are obliged sometimes to wade up to the middle in mud, sometimes to swim across creeks, and immediately afterwards, perhaps, to expose their naked bodies to a scorching sun. They are kept constantly to their work by a soldier, or "the licitor of some petty police-officer," who follows them closely, carrying in his hand an enormous whip, with which he lashes them as often as they show the least disposition to idleness, and with as little reluctance as if they were a team of horses. "They often slip into narrow paths," says the historian of an early Dutch embassy, "and are drowned; and if any grow faint and weary, there is one who follows, and never leaves beating them till they go on or die." The trackers of each boat are generally changed every day: they receive for their labour a remuneration, very scanty indeed, in reference to the price of provisions; and

they have no allowance made to them for returning to the place from which they were taken.

As the canals and rivers of China are extensively used by the officers of the government, the boatmen and others who are employed in their navigation are occasionally the victims of that cruelty and oppression which, in spite of the paternal nature of the government, do not seem to be altogether absent from its administration, and altogether unknown to its various functionaries. In the narratives of travellers, we read repeatedly of the infliction of a "bamboozing," which seems to be a punishment as largely resorted to in the celestial empire,—and often with as little reason,—as the kindred process of "bastinadoing," in Turkey and Persia.

The common practice of flogging with a bamboo, (says Mr. Barrow,) has generally been considered by the missionaries in the light of a gentle correction, exercised by men in power over their inferiors just as a father would chastise his son, but not as a punishment to which disgrace is attached. However lightly these gentlemen* may choose to treat this humiliating chastisement to which all are liable, from the prime-minister to the peasant, it is but too often inflicted in the anger, and by the caprice, of a man in office, and frequently with circumstances of unwarrantable cruelty and injustice.

When Lord Macartney's embassy descended the Pei-ho (or White River) on its return from Pekin, the stream being very shallow, one of the accommodation barges got aground in the middle of the night. The air was piercingly cold; and the poor creatures belonging to the vessel were busy until sunrise in the midst of the water, endeavouring to get her off. The rest of the fleet had proceeded; and the patience of the superintending officer being exhausted, he ordered his soldiers to flog the captain, and the whole crew. The punishment was accordingly inflicted, in the most unmerciful manner; and this, we are told, was "their only reward for the use of the yacht, their time and labour, for two days." A still more remarkable display of arbitrary power occurred, while the embassy was ascending the Pei-ho, from its mouth in the Yellow Sea, to the town of Tong-tcheow-foo, where the land journey to Pekin commenced. It happened one morning that some of the provisions, which it was the daily custom to supply to the embassy, were a little tainted,—a circumstance not very wonderful, considering that the weather was extremely hot, the mercury in Fahrenheit's thermometer ranging from 82° to 88° in the shade. Nevertheless, the officers to whom had been assigned the task of furnishing the supplies, were instantly deprived of their rank, and all their servants severely bamboozed. Lord Macartney interceded with the two mandarins, Van-ta-gin and Chon-ta-gin, who had been appointed to attend the embassy, from the first moment of disembarkation, in favour of the degraded delinquents: he was heard with great attention, but "perceived that little indulgence or relaxation from strict discipline was to be expected on such occasions."

The charitable supposition that these acts of

* The missionaries alluded to by the writer, are the Jesuits who were permitted a long time ago to settle at Pekin, but have gradually been expelled; they used to be the only authority for Europeans on Chinese matters, but many of their statements are now found to require material correction. Another passage to the same effect as that in the text may be quoted. "In travelling through the country, a day seldom escaped without our witnessing the application of the Pan-tse, or bamboo, and generally in such a manner that it might be called by any other name except a gentle correction. A Chinese suffering under this punishment, cries out in the most piteous manner; a Tartar bears it in silence. A Chinese, after receiving a certain number of strokes, falls down on his knees as a matter of course before him who ordered the punishment, thanking him in the most humble manner for the fatherly kindness he had testified towards his son, in thus putting him in mind of his errors: a Tartar grumbles, and disputes the point as to the right that a Chinese may have to flog him, or he turns away in solemn silence."

severity should rather be considered as isolated instances of infirmity of temper on the part of individuals, than be taken as samples of a general practice, will unfortunately not be found tenable. One of the mandarins to whom Lord Macartney addressed his ineffectual appeal, was remarkable for a kind and amiable disposition, which attracted the regards of our countrymen in an extraordinary degree. Besides, we constantly read of similar cases; and an exact parallel to one of those above mentioned may be found in the narrative of the first embassy which was sent by the Dutch East India Company in year 1655, and which then traversed China from Canton to Pekin, by the great line of water-communication. In their course from Nan-gan-foo towards the great Yang-tse-kiang, or Yellow River, the party descended the stream called the Kan-kiang, "which runs there as swift as an arrow from the bow, and is full of banks, sands and shoals, so that, though they went down the stream, their ships were often in danger." In this passage, a yacht, carrying one of the ambassadors, and the presents destined for the emperor, fell into a whirlpool, and, after being whirled about by the eddies, at last ran aground, and could not be got off without the trouble of unloading. "The mandarins commanded the watermen and master to be severely lashed with a thick leather whip for their neglect; but the ambassadors interceded for the latter." The former, we presume, were left to their fate, as unworthy of the Dutchmen's interference; yet if blame could have rightly rested with any one, where the navigation was so difficult, we may fairly infer, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that it should have been with the master.

The lot of the trackers seems to be a harder one than that of the boatmen. The appearance which they present, when engaged in their toilsome occupation, has generally excited the commiseration of travellers. There is often a large proportion of old men and boys in their number.

Poor miserable men (says Dr. Morrison) passed cords across their breast, over one shoulder and under the other arm, and walked forward in a leaning posture, pulling at the end of the rope, which had its other end fastened to the mast-head of the vessel to which they were giving motion.

Mr. Abel, who accompanied Lord Amherst's embassy, and who seems disposed to regard matters in a more favourable light than some others, after remarking upon the uninteresting nature of the country on the banks of the Pei-ho, between Ta-koo and Tien-sing, says:—

The scenery had only novelty and strangeness to recommend it; but had it possessed the attractions of Arcadia, they would have been polluted by miserable objects of wretched and naked men tracking our boats, and toiling often through a deep mire under a burning sun. These poor fellows were attended by overseers, who kept them to their work, and prevented their desertion, but did not, as far as I could observe, exert their authority with cruelty. Scarcely had our eyes become in some degree familiarized with their appearance, when they were offended by the sight of a dead body frightfully swollen, lying on his back, and floating down the river. Our boatmen passed it without regard. I must confess, that in turning from the contemplation of such objects, I recovered with some difficulty that state of mind which was necessary to an unprejudiced examination of the country through which I was passing.

Where there are not persons whose constant occupation is tracking, or where an extraordinary number is required, the officers of the government impress poor people wherever they can find them, for one day's journey. As the service is very laborious, and very ill rewarded, considerable difficulty is often experienced in obtaining men to perform it. In order to obviate the delay which might thus arise, it is

customary when a fleet is expected, to have the reliefs in readiness for their arrival; and for this purpose they are sometimes confined for a day or a night, because, if left at liberty, they would infallibly run away. When Lord Amherst's embassy arrived at a town called Kao-yen-chow, four of the party went to see a temple which stands there, dedicated to *Ming-keen-shéh-wang*, or the "ten judges in Hades," according to Dr. Morrison; but they found its gate chained up, and the seal of the magistrate of the town upon it. Two or three hundred miserable wretches were confined in it; and an attendant mandarin told our countrymen that the boats having been expected the night before, these poor fellows had been pressed to track them; and the authorities apprehending that if permitted to return to their homes, they would not come back, had shut them up the preceding evening. With some difficulty the party obtained an entrance; but they found the courts of the temple in a condition which rendered a survey if not impracticable, at least very unpleasant.

Despotism in China, (says Mr. Ellis,) as elsewhere, presses with least weight upon the lower orders; our trackers have at different times struck for wages, and refused to proceed until their just demands were satisfied.

In a subsequent passage of his journal, the writer furnishes a fact not quite consistent with this opinion.

Our trackers, (he says,) whether driven to it by being overworked or underpaid, were very insubordinate; and the disturbance was not quelled till some of them had been punished with the bamboo."

The system of impressing men to serve as trackers seems to be productive of much misery. So hateful is the service, that the people strive in every way to avoid it. When Lord Macartney's embassy traversed China, those who had tracked the vessels throughout the day generally deserted by night; they knew the difficulty which the officers would have in getting others to relieve them; and they knew also that till others were procured, their own services would be required. To supply their places, very harsh measures were commonly resorted to: the officers used to despatch their soldiers to the nearest village, where the inhabitants, taken by surprise, would be forced out of their beds to join the yachts. Scarcely a night occurred, in which some poor wretches did not suffer the lashes of the soldiers, for attempting to escape, or for pleading the excuse of old age or infirmity. It was painful, we are assured, to behold the deplorable condition of some of these poor creatures; several were half-naked, and appeared to be wasting and languishing for want of food. Mr. Barrow gives a melancholy picture of their sufferings, in describing what occurred on the night of the 18th of October (1793), when the embassy was approaching Canton.

This being the night of the full moon, we were allowed to enjoy very little rest. The observance of the usual ceremonies, which consist of firing their small petards, beating at intervals the noisy gong, harsh squalling music, and fire-works, required that our vessels should remain stationary; and these nocturnal orgies ceased only with the appearance of the sun. There was, however, another cause of detention at this place. In sailing against the stream of the Eu-ho, it was necessary that the barges should be tracked by men, and these men were to be pressed or forced into the laborious service, from the villages bordering upon the river. The usual way of doing this was to send out the soldiers, or attendants of the officers, before the vessels in the dusk of the evening, to take the poor wretches by surprise in their beds. But the ceremony of the full moon, by retarding their usual hour of retiring to rest, had put them on their guard; and on the approach of the emissaries of government, all that were liable to be pressed into this

service had absconded; so that in addition to the noise of the gongs, and the trumpets, and crackers, our ears were frequently assailed by the cries and lamentations of persons under the punishment of the bamboo, or the whip, for claiming their exemption from joining the yachts, and acting as trackers. When the group that had been collected for this purpose was brought together in the morning, it was impossible not to regard it with an eye of pity.

Most of them consisted of infirm and decrepit old men, and the rest were such lank, sickly-looking, ill-clothed creatures, that the whole group appeared to be much fitter for an hospital, than for performing any kind of labour. Our companions pretended to say that every farmer who rented lands upon the public rivers or canals, was obliged, by the tenure on which he held his lease, to furnish such a number of men to track the vessels in the service of the government, whenever it might be required; but that on the present being an extraordinary occasion, they had resolved to pay them, as they called it, in a handsome manner, which was at the rate of something less than seven-pence a day, without any allowance for returning to their homes; a price for labour which bore no sort of proportion to that of the necessities of life; and it was even doubtful if this pittance was ever paid to them.

Our engraving represents a group of trackers cooking their meal over an earthen stove; the standing figure is employed in eating his rice after the usual fashion,—that is to say, by putting the edge of the bowl against his lower lip, and knocking the contents into his mouth with the chopsticks. Their chief food is rice; but, as a luxury, they sometimes indulge in vegetables fried in rancid oil, or mixed up with animal offal. During Lord Macartney's journey, the persons employed about the vessels which carried the ambassador and his train, were accustomed to receive with the greatest thankfulness the relics of the provisions furnished to our countrymen; the very tea-leaves which had been used were sought after with avidity (in China!) and boiled up, to afford a second decoction. They had only two regular meals in the day, one about ten o'clock in the morning, and the other at four or five in the afternoon; "they generally, however, had the frying-pan on the fire at three or four o'clock in the morning." The wine, or liquor, which the embassy received in large jars, but which was so miserably bad as not to be used by the party, afforded a great treat to these poor people, whose circumstances seldom allowed them an opportunity of touching such a luxury.

The trackers sometimes wear shoes made of straw, such as are to be seen in the engraving; but they go more frequently with naked feet. The flat boards lying on the ground in the front of the picture, are applied by them to the breast when in the act of tracking. Like the boatmen, the trackers have a song which they chant to inspirit them in their toil, and to give unison to their efforts; they call it *tseen-foo-ko*, their own name being *teen-fou*.

The greater part of it, (says Dr. Morrison,) is merely the tone of exertion, interspersed with a few expressions alluding to the country they are passing, and the place to which they look as the end of their toils. One person repeats the sentences which have meaning, and the whole join in a chorus, "*Hei-o Wo-to-heio*," the import of which appears to be *Pull away, let us pull away*.

The learned doctor requested a man to write down a tracker's song, and it concluded by holding out the hope of a breakfast when they reached *T'ien-tsin*.

Young children are excellent judges of the motives and feelings of those who attempt to control them; and, if you would win their love, and dispose them to comply with your reasonable requests, you must treat them with perfect candour and uprightness. Never attempt to cheat, even the youngest, into a compliance with your wishes; for, though you succeed at the time, you lessen your influence, by the loss of confidence which follows detection.—*The Young Lady's Friend*.

ADVENTURES OF A JEWEL-HUNTER.

I WAS about fourteen years old, when my father, who was a lapidary, carried me to the great fair of Cracow, whither he went to make purchases for his business. A crowd was collected before the door of a merchant whom we were seeking, and on inquiring the cause of the assembly, we were asked if we had not heard of the wonderful opal which Schmidt, the jewel-hunter, had found in the mountains, and which had just been bought for the king at the price of 100,000 florins? My father was now as anxious to see the opal as anybody else, and having reached the shop, the merchant took us into a back room, carrying the opal with him, and telling the crowd it was not to be seen any more that day.

Whilst my father and the merchant were making their bargains, I kept the precious stone in my hand, admiring it, and thinking of its extraordinary value. I was entirely ignorant of the worth of jewels; for being designed for the profession of the law, I had been put to school at an early age, and was more an adept at my books, than a judge of precious stones. I knew, however, that the stone I held in my hand had been purchased by the king for 100,000 florins, a sum that baffled my utmost powers of conception. All the way from Cracow to Mielnitz I was occupied with the thoughts of it, and every minute was turning my head to look at the mountains, almost expecting to see the colours of the opal reflected from some sun-gilt cliff.

A few days after my father returned home, he fell sick, and died at the end of eight days, leaving his family but slenderly provided for. It was now out of the question to think of breeding me for the law, and I petitioned to be placed under the care of a lapidary. My mother consented, and at the window of my garret, which commanded a view of the long chain of the Carpathian mountains, I spent much of my time, often saying to myself, "I see no reason why I, as well as Schmidt, may not find an opal."

At the end of three years I requested leave of my master to go and see my uncle at Danavitz, determined to make this journey subservient to my first trial of fortune; and accordingly provided myself secretly with a hammer, and such other tools as I thought might be useful. My uncle received me with great kindness, and by him and his family I was liberally supplied with everything requisite; and with the good wishes of all the family, and injunctions to return in four days, I slung my sack over my shoulder, and marched away to begin my career as a jewel-hunter.

Nothing could be more buoyant than my spirits were, as I began to ascend the mountains: I felt as if all the riches they contained were one day or other to be my own. This was the very chain among which Schmidt had found his opal,—and might there not be other jewels in the mountains worth ten times as much? I soon fell to work, and continued my exertions without finding anything that in the least resembled a jewel, until I was obliged to stop from exhaustion: this was rather disheartening, but I concluded I had not yet penetrated far enough into the mountains, and I felt persuaded that next day my labours would turn to more account. I awoke before daybreak; and long before the highest mountain-peaks were tipped with the sunbeams, I was making my way over rocks and torrents, not a bit daunted by the unsuccessful labour of the day before, but with the fullest expectation of something to verify my predictions of good fortune. This day I half filled my sack; not, indeed, with opals, but with

stones and ores. Schmidt, thought I, did not find his opal the first time he went among the mountains; I must not be too hasty in my ambition. The next morning, I began to retrace my steps, filling my sack as I went along, and arrived at the close of the third day at my uncle's house. Great congratulations followed the display of my riches; and my cousins looked upon me as the most wonderful youth in Galicia.

Next day I took my leave, carrying my treasures with me; but knowing that more than half of them were worthless, I stopped on the brink of a little stream, and after a rigid examination of the contents of my sack, threw more than half into the water, making myself sure that what I had reserved was worth a hundred and fifty florins at least. I went to my master's house, and found him at work. "I have brought something with me," said I, laying a handful on the table. He took up one and then another; and slightly glancing at them, threw them into a corner which he made the receptacle for rubbish. One handful after the other was consigned to the corner: the last handful was produced, and in it there was one specimen upon which my hopes were chiefly grounded, and upon which I had made some marks, when I displayed my riches to my uncle. He looked more narrowly at this, but ended by saying, "All rubbish, my boy; so get to your business." My hopes then were at an end; and the three hours that intervened before bed-time, were the most unhappy of my life.

As I lay in bed, it occurred to me that my master might be mistaken, and that the jewel I had marked might be judged differently of by some other lapidary. I crept softly into my master's workshop, and lighted a lamp at the expiring embers of a fire, which he had been using in some of his operations. I then began to search among the rubbish for the stone which was marked, but I could nowhere find it; till at length, weary of my unsuccessful labour, I sat down before my master's table, which was strewn with the instruments he had used in polishing a beautiful stone that lay with the polished side towards me. It was the very stone I had been seeking. I seized on it, stole back to my chamber, dressed myself, and instantly took the road to Cracow, leaving a line for my master, informing him, that having discovered him to be a thief, I had left his service, and had taken with me my own jewel, which my uncle could prove to be mine, by a mark which I had made upon it. I disposed of my jewel to the merchant I had visited with my father, for a hundred florins; and returned home with a present for each member of my family, and more than eighty florins in my pocket.

There was no question as to my future trade. The money that my jacinth fetched served to equip me for my next expedition: and leaving forty florins at home, on my nineteenth birthday I set out for Kostalesko, with the blessings of a mother, and the good wishes of three sisters, all of whom I promised to portion handsomely, as soon as I had an opal worth but 20,000 florins.

Almost every day during a year, I spent more or less of it among the mountains. Sometimes my labours were rewarded; but oftener I found nothing worth so much as a few groschen. Never did my hopes diminish, nor my toil become irksome; and if one blow of the hammer did not loose an opal from the rock, I thought a second might.

At length, one day, a stone dropped into my hand, with all the distinguishing marks of a valuable opal. I eagerly proceeded to polish a part, and the varied hues of the opal flashed upon my delighted eye.

This stone was little inferior in size to the one I had seen at Cracow, and I felt assured it could not be worth less than 50,000 florins.

On arriving at home, my countenance told the importance of my secret, and the opal was drawn from its hiding-place, and presented to the wondering eyes of the family-circle. The next week the great Cracow fair would take place, and thither I, of course, determined to go.

It was soon settled what was to be done with the 50,000 florins, and I left home upon a good horse, bought with the remnant of the hundred florins on the morning of the day of the great fair, with my opal in a leathern-bag, which was suspended round my neck by a copper chain. Before mid-day I arrived at the capital, and, having put up my horse, walked towards the great square. I had no reason to doubt the integrity of the merchant with whom I had formerly dealt; but before finally disposing of my treasure, I wished to enjoy the triumph of possessing it, and of buzzing about the rarity and value of my possession.

As I went onward, my attention was fixed by the extraordinary richness and variety of a display of wares upon a long row of tables, placed beneath an awning, behind which an Eastern merchant was smoking. Every species of costly and rare merchandise lay upon the tables. But the contents of one other table eclipsed them all: it was covered with all kinds of precious stones ranged in rows, circles, and pyramids, but among them I saw no opal. "Friend," said I, "you reign the emperor of the fair: upon your tables are concentrated the riches of all the cities of the East; and yet, there seems one thing wanting." "What," said he, without removing his pipe, "would you desire to see added?" "I see," replied I, "this beautiful pyramid, composed of precious stones, with this fine pearl surmounting the whole; but for this pearl I would substitute an opal." "I could soon make that change," said the merchant, "but to my mind the pearl brings the pyramid to a better point. There is not a jewel, young man, that ever came out of the bowels of the earth, that I have not in my possession; and I will venture the worth of this pyramid that I can show a better stone of every kind than any other merchant in Europe." I replied, "I have not the value of the pyramid to stake, but I will venture the value of a jewel which I will produce, that you will not match it." "Name its value," said the merchant, "and I will take your word for it: select its worth among these jewels, place your own opposite, and whoever gains shall take up both stakes. You yourself shall decide whether or not I produce a jewel more valuable of its kind than yours." This I thought extremely fair, and selected a diamond which I judged to be worth 50,000 florins. I now pulled the chain over my head, and opening the leathern purse, drew forth my opal. "A fine opal, indeed," said the merchant, "and worth more than the diamond you selected, and precisely the thing for the top of the pyramid. My own, you see, is too large," added he, opening the lid of an ebony box, and laying upon the table the very opal that Schmidt had sold to the king. What were my feelings at that moment! The object of my toil, and hopes, and promises, gone from me in an instant, and by my own folly and vanity. The merchant deliberately resumed his pipe, took up my opal, and displacing the pearl, crowned the pyramid with the opal. "Now," said he, "the pyramid is faultless." He then returned his own opal into the box, and calmly began to arrange some of his wares.

I turned away in the deepest dejection, and repaired to the shop of the merchant whom I knew. "How could you be so mad," said he, "as to stake any opal against Haranzabad? Had you come to me first, you would have known that the king pledged his opal to that merchant for a loan, upon condition that he should not exhibit it openly at the fair."

I sold my horse, and instead of turning homeward with 50,000 florins, I had but 200, partly the price of my horse, and partly the balance of a debt owing to my father. I was still a jewel-hunter, and had still my fortune to make; yet, at this very moment, when my hopes were nearly crushed, they began to rise again; and the very hour that witnessed the destruction of all my expectations, saw also born within me, a sturdier determination than ever to renew them, and as firm a persuasion that they would yet be rewarded.

Providence, however, has not yet thought fit to crown my hopes, but I have lived happily. Never has my hammer laid open the lustre of another opal, but I have always been cheered on by expectation; my toil has never been rewarded by independence, but it has brought me food and raiment, and left me something to wish for: I have never entered Cracow again with the exulting thought that I was about to possess myself of 50,000 florins, but neither have I ever quitted it with the painful reflection, that I have lost the fruit of a year's labour, and of many years' hope: I have had no portions to bestow upon my sisters, but they have married, and been happy without them; no provision to settle upon my mother, but she is long ago beyond the need of it: no barony to offer Ronza, but she has never appeared to wish for more than she possesses. Old age steals fast upon me, and so would it if I had possessed riches: death has no greater terrors for the poor than for the rich man; nor has he so much to disturb the serenity of his meditations. My children regret that I should leave them, and their regrets are sincere, because when I am gone they expect no equivalent; yet had I now even youth and vigour, I would still pursue the occupation, which I trust my children will never desert, for one day or other their labours will be rewarded. Schmidt has not found the first opal, nor myself the last; and riches may be enjoyed by him who knows how to use them. Go on, then, my children; do not shrink from toils which your father has borne, nor despair of the success which he once achieved, and of which the inexperience of youth only robbed him of the reward.

[Abridged from *Solitary Walks through many Lands.*]

VALUE OF TIME,

AND IMPORTANCE OF EARLY HABITS OF DILIGENCE AND INDUSTRY.

ON by far the greater part of you, it is incumbent to acquire those qualities which shall fit you for action, rather than speculation. It is not, therefore, by mere study, by the mere accumulation of knowledge, that you can hope for eminence. Mental discipline, the exercise of the faculties of the mind, the quickening of your apprehension, the strengthening of your memory, the forming of a sound, rapid, and discriminating judgment, are even of more importance than the stores of learning. If you will consider these faculties as the most precious gifts of nature,—if you will be persuaded, as you ought to be, that they are capable of constant, progressive, and, therefore, almost indefinite improvement, that by arts similar to those by which magic feats of dexterity and bodily strength are performed, a capacity

for the nobler feats of the mind may be acquired,—the first, the especial object of your youth, will be to establish that control over your own mind, and your own habits, that shall ensure the proper cultivation of this precious inheritance. Try, even for a short period, the experiment of exercising such control. If, in the course of your study, you meet with a difficulty, resolve on mastering it; if you cannot by your own unaided efforts, be not ashamed to admit your inability, and seek for assistance. Practise the economy of time; consider time like the faculties of your mind, a precious estate, that every moment of it well applied is put out to an exorbitant interest. I do not say, devote yourself to unremitting labour, and sacrifice all amusement; but I do say, that the zest of amusement itself, and the successful result of application, depend in a great measure on the economy of time. When you have lived fifty years, you will have seen many instance in which the man who finds time for everything, for punctuality in all the relations of life, for the pleasure of society, for the cultivation of literature, for every rational amusement, is he who is the most assiduous in the active pursuits of his profession.

Estimate also, properly, the force of habit; exercise a constant, an unremitting vigilance, over the acquirement of habit, in matters that are apparently of entire indifference, that, perhaps, are really so, independent of the habits they engender. It is by the neglect of such trifles that bad habits are acquired; that the mind, by tolerating negligence, procrastination in matters of small account, but frequent recurrence, matters of which the world takes no notice, becomes accustomed to the same defects in matters of higher importance. If you will make the experiment of which I have spoken, if for a given time you will resolve that there shall be a complete understanding of everything you read, or the honest admission that you do not understand it; that there shall be a strict regard to the distribution of time; that there shall be a constant struggle against the bondage of bad habit, a constant effort which can only be made within to master the mind, to subject its various processes to healthful action,—the early fruits of this experiment, the feeling of self-satisfaction, the consciousness of growing strength, the force of good habit, will be inducements to its continuance, more powerful than any exhortations. These are the arts, this is the patient and laborious process by which, in all times, and in all professions, the foundations of excellence and of fame have been laid.

I am well aware that the observations I have addressed to you have nothing of novelty to recommend them; that the truths to which I have adverted are so obvious, that they scarcely require the aid of reasoning to enforce them. But they are truths of vital importance, and it too frequently happens that the ready assent which we give to them has not the practical influence on our conduct which it ought to have. If it had, how many of us would have been spared the painful retrospect,—that retrospect which you may avert, but which we cannot,—of opportunities lost; time mispent, habits of indolence or negligence, become inveterate.

Hitherto, I have referred exclusively to the considerations of worldly advantage and worldly fame, as encouragements to early or continued exertion. You have other incitements to labour, other rewards of virtuous exertion, should the hope of praise or glory be obscured. You have the express command of God to improve the faculties which distinguish you from the beasts that perish. You have the awful

knowledge, that of the use or neglect of these faculties a solemn account must be rendered. You have the assurance of an immortality different from that of worldly fame. By every motive which can influence a reflecting and responsible being, "a being of a large discourse, looking before and after," by regard for your own success and happiness in this life, by the fear of future discredit, by the hope of lasting fame,—by all these considerations do I conjure you, while you have yet time, while your minds are yet flexible, to form them on the models which are the nearest to perfection. By motives yet more urgent, by higher and purer aspirations, by the duty of obedience to the will of God, by the awful account you will have to render, not merely of moral actions, but of faculties intrusted to you for improvement,—by all these high arguments do I conjure you, so "to number your days that you may apply your hearts unto wisdom;" unto that wisdom, which, directing your ambition to the noble end of benefiting mankind, and teaching you humble reliance on the merits and on the mercy of your Redeemer, may support you "in the time of your tribulation," may admonish you "in the time of your wealth," and "in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment," may comfort you with the hope of deliverance.

[SIR ROBERT PEEL'S Address to the Students of Glasgow University.]

THE SONG OF THE BREEZE.

I've swept o'er the mountain, the forest and fell,
I've played on the rock where the wild chamois dwell,
I have tracked the desert so dreary and rude,
Through the pathless depths of its solitude;
Through the ocean-caves of the stormy sea,
My spirit has wandered at midnight free;
I have slept in the lily's fragrant bell,
I have moaned in the ear through the rosy shell;
I have roamed alone by the gurgling stream,
I have danced at eve with the pale moonbeam;
I have kissed the rose in its blushing pride,
Till my breath the dew from its lips has dried;
I have stolen away, on my silken wing,
The violets' scent in the early Spring.
I have hung over groves where the citron grows,
And the clustering bloom of the orange blows,
I have sped the dove on its errand home,
O'er mountain and river, and sun-gilt dome.
I have hushed the babe in its cradled rest,
With my song, to sleep on its mother's breast.
I have chased the clouds in their dark career,
Till they hung on my wings in their shapes of fear;
I have rent the oak from its forest-bed,
And the flaming brand of the fire-king sped;
I have rushed with the fierce tornado forth,
On the tempest's wing from the stormy north;
I have lashed the waves till they rose in pride,
And the mariner's skill in their wrath defied;
I have borne the mandate of fate and doom,
And swept the wretch to his watery tomb.
I have shrieked the wail of the murdered dead,
Till the guilty spirit hath shrunk with dread.
I have hymned my dirge o'er the silent grave,
And bade the cypress more darkly wave.
There is not a spot upon land or sea,
Where thou may'st not, enthusiast, wander with me.

ELEANOR DICKENSON.

DISTANCE in truth produces in idea the same effect as in real perspective; objects are softened and rounded, and rendered doubly graceful; the harsher and more ordinary points of character are melted down; and those by which it is remembered, are the more striking outlines, that mark sublimity, grace, or beauty. There are mists, too, in the mental as in the natural horizon, to conceal what is less pleasing in distant objects; and there are happy lights to stream in full glory upon those points which can profit by brilliant illumination.—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

NOTES ON FOREST TREES. No. VIII.
THE WEYMOUTH PINE, (*Pinus strobus*, Linnæus.)



THE WEYMOUTH PINE.—WHITE PINE OF COMMERCE.

THIS beautiful species of Pine, so well known for many years past as the Weymouth Pine of our shrubberies, appears to have become naturalized with us. It is, however, a native of the northern parts of the continent and islands of America, to which alone it is peculiar, being by far the most abundant in our own provinces of Canada and New Brunswick.

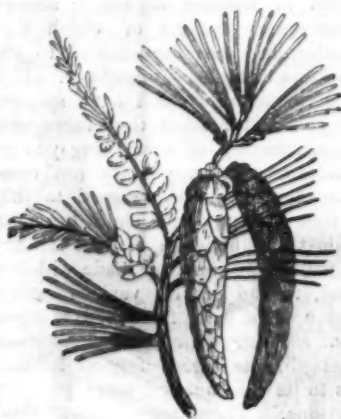
Its leaves burst out from the sheath in clusters of five, and in its growth it shows a tendency to a spiral turn, particularly visible in masts of vessels. It is the most majestic of the trees of the Canadian forest, with the exception of some of the family found in the "far West," in the neighbourhood of Columbia River, reported to be often 250 feet high, and 50 in circumference, whilst the *White Pine* is rarely found to exceed 150 feet in height, and five in diameter at the foot. When growing in open space, it is beautifully feathered to the ground, but in the Canadian forests is no more than an immense stick, with a small quantity of brush at the head, in about the same proportion as hair on the tail of an elephant.

The age to which it attains is not known; 1500 annular lines have been counted, each being considered as indicative of one year's growth. It is the *White Pine* of commerce, and from its large size, small specific gravity, straightness of growth, freedom from knots, and facility in working, the consumption is immense, being equally in repute for the largest masts of our men-of-war and the smallest article of carving or interior decoration. As it resists the sun, and is not brittle, it is greatly preferred by the Americans for the decks of their ships; whilst in this country, it is equally prized for the manufacture of musical instruments; were it not for the supply

from our own colonies, there would be the greatest difficulty in procuring masts for our navy, and it is a singular fact that the French Government also draws a part of its supplies of masts from Canada.

Trees for masts are, however, difficult and expensive to procure, being often required ninety-nine feet long, and thirty inches cube, at fourteen feet from the butt; measuring, when *dressed*, above thirteen loads of fifty cubic feet. Those in the neighbourhood of navigable waters, have long ago been cut down, and they must now be looked for in the recesses of the forest, perhaps three, four, or five hundred miles from the place of shipment, and require a road to be cut through *the bush* for their conveyance from the locality of the tree to the nearest water-course. Even in new and hitherto untouched parts, not one tree in ten thousand is fit to convert into a mast of the smallest size for the Royal Navy.

The *lumbering* business in Canada is one of great hardship and endurance. The establishment of a first-rate *Shanty*, as it is called (*Chantier*, French) by the Americans and settlers, from the French Canadians, is a matter of great outlay. It must be commenced by the 1st of October, for the supply of the succeeding year. The party, consisting of from thirty to sixty persons, with as many horses and oxen, with provisions and provender for six months, fix themselves in a neighbourhood previously selected; the *Advance* made by the merchant of Quebec, Montreal, or St. John's, (as it may be,) amounting to little short of two thousand pounds.



LEAVES AND BLOSSOM OF THE WEYMOUTH PINE.

This timber is imported into Great Britain both in square timber and deals, probably in no very different proportion. The former being called *White Pine*, and the deals *Yellow Pine*, possibly to distinguish them from the *White Deals* of the Baltic, which are cut from the *Spruce Fir*, or *Abies*. The importance of this tree to the commerce of this country, may be in some degree estimated from the fact, that nearly four thousand cargoes, generally of large vessels, are loaded annually from Canada and New Brunswick, nearly two-thirds of which may be considered as composed of *White Pine*, either as square timber or in deals.

As a great deal has been said of a tendency in this timber to what is called *dry rot*, we shall shortly refer to this subject. N. G.

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